

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1432

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MA

SUBJECT: CHARGE'S CALL ON NEW FOREIGN MINISTER

REFS: (A) STATE 220757, (B) 220773, (C) 108501, (D) 111286

SUMMARY. DURING COURTESY CALL ON NEW FOREIGN MINISTER, CHARGE REVIEWED VARIOUS ASPECTS OF GDRM'S POLICIES WHICH ARE OF CONCERN TO USG. FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO REMOVE THE CAUSES OF POOR RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES BUT HE DID NOT ELABORATE. THERE IS NO INDICATION AS YET THAT RECENT GDRM CHANGES WILL IMPROVE GDRM'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US. END SUMMARY.

1. CHARGE CALLED ON NEW GDRM FOREIGN MINISTER RAKOTOMAVO SEPTEMBER 7. RAKOTOMAVO OPENED DISCUSSION BY STATING THAT HE HOPES TO BE ABLE TO "REMOVE ALL THE CLOUDS IN US-MALAGASY RELATIONS." (A FAVORITE EXPRESSION OF MALAGASY SPOKESMEN AT TIMES OF COURTESY CALLS IS THAT "THERE ARE NO CLOUDS IN OUR RELATIONS.") I RESPONDED THAT THE CLOUDS THAT EXIST RESULT FROM THE CLOSING OF THE NASA STATION AND OTHER ANNOYANCES SERVED UP BY THE GDRM, SUCH AS FREQUENT ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA IN MADAGASCAR MEDIA AND THE GDRM'S FAILURE TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION US RATIONALE ON SUBJECTS OF GREAT INTEREST TO US.

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2. I BROUGHT WITH ME AIDE MEMOIRES ON SUBJECTS OF

ISRAEL, PUERTO RICO, AND KOREA, DRAWING FROM REFS B, C, AND D. SINCE FOREIGN MINISTER IS NEW TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IT WAS NECESSARY TO EDUCATE HIM AT THIS POINT SINCE I CANNOT EXPECT TO HAVE ADDITIONAL MEETINGS WITH HIM BEFORE HE DEPARTS FOR UNGA AND I CANNOT COUNT ON HIS SUBORDINATES PROVIDING SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ON US VIEWS FROM AIDE MEMOIRES WE HAVE SENT PREVIOUSLY. FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE AIDE MEMOIRES, NOTING THAT HE WAS NEW TO THIS BUSINESS AND THAT HE WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO READING THE OFFICIAL US POSITION ON THESE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS. IN THE END, HOWEVER, HE WAS NONCOMMITTAL, EVEN THOUGH I TRIED TO DRAW HIM OUT ON SPECIFIC SUBJECT OF NORTH KOREA ACCORDING TO GUIDANCE PROVIDED REF A.

3. I REFERRED TO UNRESOLVED STATUS OF NASA STATION IN THAT GDRM HAS NOT REPLIED TO OUR DECEMBER 23 NOTE. I ALSO REFERRED TO DEPARTURE LAST WEEK OF NCOIC AND THAT, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT DISPUTE GDRM'S RIGHT TO REQUEST THAT WE WITHDRAW ONE OF OUR PERSONNEL, IT WOULD BE OF GREAT HELP IF WE COULD LEARN OF ALLEGATIONS AGAINST NCOIC. I ALSO REFERRED TO NATIONALIZATION OF THE US OIL COMPANIES AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR COMPENSATION WOULD OPEN SOON AND WOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE INDEMNIFICATION, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF USG LAWS CONCERNING FAILURE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE INDEMNIFICATION. ALTHOUGH I PAUSED AFTER EACH OF THESE SEPARATE SUBJECTS TO AWAIT ANY POSSIBLE REPLY, FOREIGN MINISTER MADE NO SIGNIFICANT COMMENT.

4. REFERRING TO SEPTEMBER 5 NORTH KOREAN PROGRAM ON RADIO MADAGASCAR WHICH WAS STRONGLY ANTI-AMERICAN INTONE, I TOOK AIM AT RADIO MADAGASCAR'S FREQUENT, AND AT TIMES CONSTAND, ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS AND EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT WE WERE AT SERIOUS DISADVANTAGE IN THIS COUNTRY SINCE GDRM-CONTROLLED RADIO HAS BEEN TURNING MINDS OF MALAGASY PEOPLE AGAINST US. I STATED THAT WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO GET SIGNIFICANT US-PRODUCED TAPES AND FILMS ON LOCAL RADIO AND TV AND THAT APPARENTLY RADIO-TV MADAGASCAR DOES NOT ADHERE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA'S "TOUS AZIMUTH" P POLICY. FOREIGN MINISTER INDIRECTLY ACKNOWLEDGED RADIO MADAGASCAR'S BIAS BUT MEEKLY REFERRED TO NEW, UNTRIED PERSONNEL AT RADIO MADAGASCAR OVER WHOM GDRM OFFICIALS, HE CLAIMS, HAVE LITTLE CONTROL. I REPLIED THAT I COULD NOT FIND HIS REASONING ACCEPTABLE AND HOPED THAT WE WOULD SEE FAIRER TREATMENT IN THE FUTURE.

5. WE ALSO DISCUSSED PEACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, SUBJECT WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER RAISED, AND I REAFFIRMED US INTERESTS IN MAINTAINING PEACE AND STABILITY IN THIS REGION. HOWEVER, THE US BELIEVES THAT THERE IS A SECOND SIDE TO THE WHOLE PICTURE OF WHICH THE GDRM IS COGNIZANT BUT IS NOT REFLECTED IN ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE SUBJECT, SUCH AS AT COLOMBO. WE ENDED MEETING, OPENING OF WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY TV AND NEWSPAPER CAMERAMEN, AGREEING TO CONSULT FREQUENTLY IN ORDER TO CONTINUE THIS DISCUSSION. FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR MY FRANK ASSESSMENT OF OUR RELATIONS, BECAUSE, HE SAID, IT GAVE HIM A MUCH CLEARER PICTURE OF WHAT IT IS THAT DIVIDES US.

6. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH FOREIGN MINISTER WAS WILLING LISTENER, IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT THAT THIS SLOW PROCESS OF EDUCATION WILL HAVE NOTICEABLE AFFECT ON GDRM'S FOREIGN POLICY, INASMUCH AS RATSIRAKA CONTROLS THE DIRECTION OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NONETHELESS, ASIDE FROM PRESENTING OVERALL US VIEWS ON OUR RELATIONS, MEETING WAS WELL-TIMES SO THAT I WAS ABLE TO GIVE HIM OUR PRE-UNGA VIEWS (THE AIDE MEMOIRES AND OTHERS I AM PASSING TO FOREIGN MINISTRY TODAY). I CANNOT YET DETECT, DESPITE RECENT CHANGES IN MAKEUP OF GDRM, THAT MADAGASCAR'S FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE MORE FAVORABLE TO US THAN IN THE PAST YEAR.SHEINBAUM

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